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For further information about this booklet contact Charles Hobbs, editor, News Division, Office of Public Affairs, Room 406-A, U.S Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250 or call (202) 720-4026.

Statement--

Release No. 0823.93
Steve Kinsella (202) 720-4623

by
SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE MIKE ESPY

ON THE DECISION OF THE FOOD INDUSTRY TO FILE SUIT TO BLOCK SAFE HANDLING LABELS FOR MEAT AND POULTRY PRODUCTS

September 24, 1993

"I'm disappointed that this suit was filed. Since I took office, the cornerstone of this Department has been the effort to ensure the safety of the nation's meat and poultry supply. Because of my personal commitment to this, as well as my statements in support of labels shortly after being sworn in, the requirement of safe handling labels on meat and poultry products should come as no surprise to grocers, wholesalers or the nation's meat and poultry industry.

"The fact of the matter is that last week at least another six people got sick due to E.Coli contamination -- illnesses that may have been prevented with better consumer information. I'd suggest that those who are trying to stop safe handling instructions join in doing what is right for the American public rather than fighting the inconvenience of applying labels to meat and poultry products. We cannot put a price tag on the value of children and people's lives."



News Releases-

Release No. 0797.93
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Johna Pierce (202) 720-1691

OPERATORS OF PHONY MARKETS SENTENCED TO PRISON FOR FOOD STAMP FRAUD

WASHINGTON, Sept. 20--Five individuals were sentenced last week to prison and were fined for conspiracy to commit food stamp fraud for the illegal purchase, possession and redemption of over \$958,890 worth of food stamps in eastern Louisiana and western Mississippi. All five have pled guilty to conspiracy charges in Federal Court in Monroe, Louisiana.

Charles R. Gillum, acting inspector general for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, said the five set up three phony businesses in order to obtain authorization to receive and redeem food stamps, and then purchased the food stamps for cash for a fraction of their value. He said the food stamps were then redeemed for their full value at banks in both Louisiana and Mississippi. Food stamps may only be used by eligible recipients to purchase food at authorized stores.

Gillum said Lynn Aaron, of Tallulah, La., was sentenced to 51 months in prison; Coleman Montgomery, of Ferriday, La., was sentenced to 46 months in prison; Ronnie R. Robinson, of Waterproof, La., was sentenced to 24 months in prison; Diana Lee, of Ferriday, La., was sentenced to 18 months in prison; and Isaac Jefferson, of Ferriday, La., was sentenced to 6 months in prison. All five were sentenced to three years of probation after serving their prison sentences, and were ordered to pay restitution of \$932,501. Gillum said the lesser amount of restitution was ordered because some of the group's assets had been seized by the government and forfeited.

Gillum said, "The food stamp program is designed to assist low-income households obtain nutritious diets. When individuals manipulate the program by paying cash for food stamps, they deprive the young, the elderly and the underprivileged of the food benefits they need. The U.S. Department of Agriculture will vigorously investigate food stamp fraud to ensure that the program continues to enable low-income participants to provide healthful meals for their families."

The guilty pleas stemmed from an investigation by USDA's Office of Inspector General, with assistance from the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service and local law enforcement. USDA administers the Food Stamp Program at the federal level.

Gillum said the case was prosecuted by U.S. Attorney William J. Flanagan and Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert W. Gillespie, Jr., of the Western District of Louisiana.

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Release No. 0798.93
Bruce Merkle (202) 720-8026
Wayne Baggett (202) 720-2065

USDA ANNOUNCES CHANGE IN NEW MEXICO 1993-CROP UPLAND COTTON LOAN DISCOUNT RATES

WASHINGTON, Sept. 20--A change in the loan discount rates for 1993-crop upland cotton produced in New Mexico and containing bark fragments was announced today by Randy Weber, Acting Executive Vice President of the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC).

In issuing price support loans to eligible New Mexico producers for their 1993-crop upland cotton, Weber said that the CCC will discount by 250 points cotton graded at level one bark.

Upland cotton produced this year in New Mexico graded at level two bark will be discounted by 600 points, Weber said.

The discounts are the same as those announced earlier for bark found in 1993-crop cotton produced in Oklahoma and Texas, according to Weber.

REVISED SCHEDULE OF BARK DISCOUNTS 1993-CROP UPLAND COTTON

	Level 1	Level 2
Bark in Texas, Oklahoma or New Mexico	-250	-600
Bark in other States 1/	-350	-750

1/Bark in locations other than Texas, Oklahoma or New Mexico. Other extraneous matter in all locations.

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Release No. 0799.93
Marlyn Aycock (202) 720-4323

ESPY AWARDS \$1 MILLION FOR DISADVANTAGED FARMER OUTREACH

WASHINGTON, Sept. 20 -- Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy today awarded \$1 million in grants to 20 colleges and community-based organizations to develop plans to help keep disadvantaged family farmers in business.

"These grants will be used to develop five-year plans that we hope will reverse the decline of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in agriculture," he said. "We want to encourage and assist socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers to own and operate farms, participate in agricultural programs, and become an integral part of the agricultural community.

"Family farmers are an important economic asset to our country, and we are committed to helping them survive."

Each of the grantees will develop a five-year comprehensive plan on how to provide high quality technical assistance and outreach to small and disadvantaged farmers, who make up about 3 percent of the nation's 2 million farmers.

The grantees and the amounts of the grants are:

Lincoln University, Jefferson City, Missouri	30,000
American Indian Opportunities Industrialization Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota	25,000
Little Hoop Community College, Fort Totten, North Dakota	25,000
Oglala Lakota College, Kyle, South Dakota	40,000
La Courte Orielles Ojibwa Community College, Haywood, Wisconsin	40,000
University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont	50,000
Southern University A&M College, Baton Rouge, Louisiana	50,000
Florida A&M University, Tallahassee, Florida	45,000
Tuskegee University, Tuskegee, Alabama	42,000
University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, Arkansas	22,000
Eastern Oklahoma State College and Choctaw Nation, Wilburton, Oklahoma	50,000
Texas Agricultural Extension Service, College Station, Texas	41,000
Alcorn Cooperative Extension Program, Lorman, Mississippi	20,000
The Federation of Southern Cooperatives/ Land Assistance Fund (multistate), Atlanta, Georgia	155,000
Arkansas Land and Farm Development, Brinkley, Arkansas	110,000
Alabama A&M School Agriculture and Home Economics, Normal, Alabama	25,000
North Carolina Coalition of Farm and Rural Families, Durham, North Carolina	50,000
Crownpoint Institute of Technology, Crownpoint, New Mexico	50,000
University of Hawaii at Hilo, Hawaii	40,000
Association for Community Based Education, Salinas, California	50,000
Hermidad Mexicana Nacional, North Hollywood, California	40,000

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Release No. 0801.93
Terry Hill (202) 720-9964
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USDA ANNOUNCES SIGNUP FOR 1993 TREE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR FLOOD AND DROUGHT LOSSES

WASHINGTON, Sept. 20--Commercial tree growers who experienced significant tree losses in 1993 due to damaging weather including floods and drought will be able to apply for aid under the Tree Assistance Program, Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy announced today.

"Funds will be available under this program to provide much-needed relief to help growers who suffered from severe losses reestablish their stands," Espy said.

Under the program, USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation will reimburse small- and medium-scale commercial tree growers up to 65 percent of the average reestablishment costs for any loss that exceeds 35 percent of the stand, after adjustment for normal mortality. Payments may be further reduced due to funding limits.

Eligible participants include persons with orchard trees planted for fruit and nut production and forest tree seedlings planted to produce timber, pulp or Christmas trees that were lost due to damaging weather, including floods and drought, in 1993.

Eligibility is restricted to owners of 500 acres, or less, of orchard trees and 1,000 acres, or less, of forest trees. Eligible owners must also have an annual qualifying gross revenue of less than \$2 million in the tax year preceding the year in which the losses occurred and program payments may not exceed more than \$25,000 per person.

"USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service will administer the program and will disburse payments after applications have been approved by the local Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation county committee," Espy said. "Producers should contact their county ASCS office for further information."



Release No. 0802.93
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USDA ANNOUNCES LOCATIONS FOR REGIONAL HUNGER FORUMS

WASHINGTON, September 20--Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy announced today that the Department of Agriculture will hold three regional hunger forums this winter as a follow-up to the national hunger forum held in Washington in June.

Assistant Secretary for Food and Consumer Services Ellen Haas told a conference of the American Public Welfare Association today in New Orleans that the regional forums will be held in Burlington, Vermont; McAllen, Texas; and Kansas City. Specific sites and times will be announced later.

Haas said the regional forums will bring together a broad spectrum of Americans concerned about hunger. "The regional forums will give us an opportunity to hear from all those involved with our programs: those who provide the services, those who receive them -- and those with ideas for how to make them better," Haas said.

The June 17 hunger forum in Washington, chaired by Espy and Haas, drew more than 70 panelists with expertise in USDA's food assistance programs.

"We brought together the largest and most distinguished group to discuss hunger in America since the White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health nearly 25 years ago," Haas said. "The June forum helped us develop a plan for action."

"Since the 1969 White House Conference, we have begun to weave a series of safety nets to serve those most in need of assistance," Haas said. "But sadly, poverty persists and there are new issues we must confront."

Many of those issues were raised at the June forum, Haas said, by the widely diverse group of panelists. Among the speakers were Christina Ramirez, a single mother and food stamp recipient from New Mexico; activist and entertainer Dick Gregory; and former Secretary of Agriculture John Block, along with members of Congress, the Cabinet and advocacy groups.

"Using what we learned at the Washington forum, we have already begun to reinvent the food assistance programs in USDA," Haas said. She said Secretary Espy's reorganization of the Department puts more emphasis on the nutrition programs, which take up more than half of USDA's budget. He has also ordered increased emphasis on nutrition education for all Americans, and an increase in fresh fruits and vegetables in the foods provided to school children.

The Washington forum was a great success, Haas said, "but hunger is a huge and complex problem, and not all the answers are to be found in Washington. These regional forums will present new perspectives and give us a chance to hear more points of view."



Release No. 0804.93

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Dana Hallman-Bama (202) 720-2032

NEW LINE OF BIRDSFOOT TREFOIL DEVELOPED

WASHINGTON, Sept. 21--A low-growing legume plant developed for livestock grazing may find new use on highly erodible land and along America's highways, says a U.S. Department of Agriculture plant geneticist.

The legume is a new drought-resistant breeding line of birdsfoot trefoil. It is called CAD and was recently released by USDA and the University of Missouri at Columbia.

"Trefoil is great for planting in problem soils, such as strip-mined areas, because it tolerates poor soil conditions," said Paul R. Beuselinck of USDA's Agricultural Research Service.

CAD's disease and drought resistance might make it a good choice for roadside use as well, Beuselinck said. CAD looks much like fine-stemmed alfalfa with yellow flowers.

The Missouri Highway and Transportation Department has been planting other varieties of birdsfoot trefoil along highways since July 1990. Stacy Armstrong, roadside management supervisor for the highway department, said public reaction has been favorable.

Beuselinck said using birdsfoot trefoil in roadside plantings is not likely to attract deer to the edges of highways. Horses, sheep and cattle thrive on birdsfoot trefoil, but deer do not seem to like it, he noted.

Limited supplies of CAD birdsfoot trefoil seed are available to plant breeders upon written request to Paul R. Beuselinck, USDA-ARS, Plant Genetics Unit, 207 Waters Hall, Columbia, MO 65211.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: For details contact Paul R. Beuselinck, Agricultural Research Service, USDA, Columbia, MO 65211. Telephone: (314) 882-6406.

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Release No. 0805.93

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USDA SEEKS NOMINEES FOR NATIONAL FLUID MILK PROCESSOR PROMOTION BOARD

WASHINGTON, Sept. 21 -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture today asked fluid milk processors to nominate candidates for the 20-member National Fluid Milk Processor Promotion Board.

Kenneth C. Clayton, acting administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy will appoint 20 members from those nominated, contingent upon passage of an October referendum of milk processors to determine support for the program.

The appointments for the initial board will be staggered for 1, 2, or 3-year terms, to provide for continuity in the board's operations.

Under the regulations implementing the 1990 federal law, fifteen board members represent geographic regions and five are at-large members. The at-large members would include at least three fluid milk processors and at least one member from the general public. Except for the member or members from the general public, nominees must be active owners of, or employees of, a fluid milk processor.

The regulations also stipulate that no fluid milk processor shall be represented on the board by more than one member.

Fluid milk processors and other interested parties may submit nominations for positions on the board for regions in which they are located or market fluid milk. They also may nominate persons for at-large members.

The 15 member regions are: 1 -- Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont; 2 -- New York and New Jersey; 3 -- Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and the District of Columbia; 4 -- Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina; 5 -- Florida; 6 -- Ohio and West Virginia; 7 -- Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin; 8 -- Illinois and Indiana; 9 -- Alabama, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee; 10 -- Texas; 11 -- Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, and Oklahoma; 12 -- Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Nevada, and Utah; 13 -- Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming; 14 -- Northern California (the Northern California and South Valley milk marketing areas as defined by the California Department of Food and Agriculture); 15 -- Southern California (the Southern California marketing area as defined by the California Department of Food and Agriculture).

USDA urges nomination of women, minorities, and disabled individuals, recognizing their underrepresentation on the commodity boards it oversees.

For details on the nominating process, contact Bonnie Tanner, Head, Promotion and Research Staff, Dairy Division, AMS, USDA, Rm. 2734-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, DC 20090-6456, tel. (202) 720-6909, FAX (202) 720-0285.



Release No. 0807.93
Steve Kinsella (202) 720-4623

DEPARTMENTAL CELEBRATION OF EXCELLENCE

WASHINGTON, Sept. 21--On Thursday, September 23, the Department of Agriculture will hold its Celebration of Excellence Awards Ceremony during which Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy will present major Departmental awards to individuals for their outstanding achievements. Additional activities include a free concert by singer Willie Nelson and picnic luncheon on the Mall.

Espy postponed the original awards ceremony, scheduled for June, until he could review all bonuses, awards, and ceremonies for fairness and cost savings.

"The public is demanding that every dollar spent by this and other Departments is justified," Espy said.

In the past, one USDA agency, the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, was referenced in several news reports for having spent a combined total of more than \$1 million last year and the year before for award ceremonies.

"This is one USDA," Espy said. "I questioned whether we should have 42 separate awards programs or whether we should have one awards program for the entire department. This week, we are having one award celebration for one USDA."

All employees are encouraged to attend the ceremony, which will begin at 10 a.m.



Release No. 0808.93
Billy Cox (202) 720-3329
Wayne Baggett (202) 720-2065

USDA ANNOUNCES PUBLIC LAW 480 COUNTRY ALLOCATIONS FOR FISCAL 1994

Washington, September 21--The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced tentative fiscal 1994 allocations of \$350 million to 27 countries to cover commodity loans under Title I of the Food for Peace Program. This funding will provide about 2.0 million metric tons of agricultural commodities.

According to Christopher E. Goldthwait, acting general sales manager for USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service, today's announced allocations are based on the Senate and House of Representatives conference report which provides a total of \$450.4 million for loans and \$45.9 million for ocean freight differential costs associated with cargo preference requirements.

"Situations can develop that can cause a change in country and commodity allocations during the fiscal year," Goldthwait said, "so these allocations do not necessarily represent final U.S. commitments with participating governments."

Title I of the Food for Peace Program (Public Law 480) is a concessional sales program to promote exports of agricultural commodities from the United States and to foster broad-based sustainable development in recipient countries. The program provides export financing over payment periods of 10 to 30 years, grace periods on payments of principal of up to seven years, and low interest rates.

Countries eligible for the Title I program are those developing countries experiencing a shortage of foreign exchange earnings and having difficulty meeting all of their food needs through commercial channels. The factors that determine priorities for country allocations include food needs potential for becoming a commercial U.S. market and improvement of food security through agricultural projects and economic measures. The allocations take into account changing economic and foreign policy situations, market development opportunities, existence of adequate storage facilities and possible disincentives to local production.

For further information contact: Mary T. Chambliss, FAS, USDA, (202) 720-3573. The list of country and commodity allocations follow.

First Quarter FY 1994 Public Law 480 Title I Country and Commodity Allocations

Country	\$Mil Total (Mil \$)	Undesig- nated (Mil \$)	Wheat/ Flour a/ (-----1,000 Metric Tons-----)	Rice
Albania	15.0	--	36.2	18.5
Armenia	20.0	--	108.7	18.5
Belarus	10.0	--	--	--
Bulgaria	10.0	--	--	--
Costa Rica	5.0	--	36.2	--
Cote d'Ivoire	10.0	--	--	36.9
Croatia	10.0	--	72.5	--
Dominican Rep.	5.0	--	36.2	--
Egypt	35.0	--	253.6	--
El Salvador	20.0	--	65.2	--
Georgia	20.0	--	20.0	--
Guatemala	15.0	--	108.7	--
Jamaica	20.0	--	--	44.3
Jordan	15.0	--	108.7	--
Kyrgystan	10.0	--	72.5	--
Latvia	10.0	10.0	--	--
Lithuania	10.0	--	--	--
Moldova	10.0	--	72.5	--
Morocco	15.0	--	72.5	--
Pakistan	20.0	--	--	--
Philippines	15.0	--	--	--
Poland	5.0	--	--	--
Romania	10.0	--	72.5	--
Sri Lanka	5.0	--	36.2	--
Tajikistan	10.0	--	72.5	--
Turkmenistan	10.0	--	72.5	--
Yemen	10.0	--	36.2	18.5
Total	350.0	10.0	1,353.4	136.7

P.L. 480 Title I Allocations, 1st Quarter Fiscal 1994

Country	Feed	Oilseeds			
	Grains	Veg.Oil	Meals	Tallow	Cotton
	(-----1,000 Metric Tons-----)				
Albania	--	10.1	--	--	--
Armenia	--	--	--	--	--
Belarus	52.1	--	26.6	--	--
Bulgaria	52.1	--	26.6	--	--
Costa Rica	--	--	--	--	--
Cote d'Ivoire	--	--	--	--	--
Croatia	--	--	--	--	--
Dominican Rep.	--	--	--	--	--
Egypt	--	--	--	--	--
El Salvador	52.1	--	--	16.2	--
Georgia	--	--	--	--	--
Guatemala	--	--	--	--	--
Jamaica	88.3	--	--	--	--
Jordan	--	--	--	--	--
Kyrgystan	--	--	--	--	--
Latvia	--	--	--	--	--
Lithuania	104.1	--	--	--	--
Moldova	--	--	--	--	--
Morocco	--	10.1	--	--	--
Pakistan	--	40.5	--	--	--
Philippines	--	--	79.8	--	--
Poland	--	--	--	--	14.9
Romania	--	--	--	--	--
Sri Lanka	--	--	--	--	--
Tajikistan	--	--	--	--	--
Turkmenistan	--	--	--	--	--
Yemen	--	--	--	--	--
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Total	348.7	60.7	133.0	16.2	14.9

Funding Summary (\$ Million) b/

	Loan Level	Budget Authority
Allocated Loans	350.0	270.2
Ocean Freight Financing	15.0	13.7
Unallocated Reserve	84.4	61.9
Total Availability c/	450.4	346.9

a/ Wheat Flour included as grain equivalent.

b/ The funding summary helps explain revised funding procedures for federal credit programs authorized by the Budget Enforcement Act of 1990, Title XIII of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990. These procedures, known as credit reform, require that budget authority for direct credit programs such as Title I represent the subsidy cost of the program. Subsidy costs are estimated based on the repayment terms, interest subsidies, and estimated risk of defaults. The Title I budget now includes two funding limitations the \$450.4 million available for loans and the \$346.9 million available for budget authority to cover the estimated subsidy cost of the program. Neither limitation can be exceeded.

c/ Total includes one million dollars for the Farmer to Farmer Program.

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Release No. 0809.93
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Wayne Baggett (202) 720-2065

USDA MAKES CZECH AND SLOVAK REPUBLICS ELIGIBLE FOR WHEAT UNDER THE EXPORT ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Sept. 22 -- Under Secretary of Agriculture Eugene Moos today announced that the Czech and Slovak Republics are eligible for 700,000 metric tons of wheat under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Export Enhancement Program.

Sales of wheat will be made through normal commercial channels at competitive world market prices. Sales will be facilitated through the payment of bonuses of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation. This wheat allocation will be valid until June 30, 1994, as provided in the invitations for offers. Details of the program will be issued in the near future.

For more information, call Janet M. Kavan, (202) 720-5540, or L.T. McElvain, (202) 720-6211.



Release No. 0810.93
Amichai Heppner (301) 436-5222
Jerry Redding (202) 720-4026

USDA HOLDS PUBLIC MEETING ON NONAGRICULTURAL USES OF FARM ANIMALS

WASHINGTON, Sept. 22 -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture is hosting an open forum to discuss the care and use of farm animals for nonagricultural activities regulated by the Animal Welfare Act.

The public meeting will be held at the Hilton Inn Northwest, 2945 N.W. Expressway, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73112, on Sept. 28 from 1 to 5 p.m., continuing from 8 a.m. to 12 noon the next day.

"Until 1990, we had not included farm animals in our inspections to enforce the Animal Welfare Act," said Dale F. Schwindaman, deputy administrator for regulatory enforcement and animal care in USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. "For many years, we have enforced regulations for the care and treatment of warm-blooded animals used for research, testing, exhibition or sale as pets at the wholesale level. Our experience shows that it is necessary to develop more specific requirements for farm animals being used for such purposes," he said.

Since April of 1990, APHIS inspectors have been overseeing the humane handling, housing, care, treatment and transportation of farm animals used for nonagricultural purposes, using the general standards and guidelines for warmblooded animals. In the interim, APHIS officials have been looking for input to write more specific standards for these animals. The decision to hold an open forum was prompted by a desire to get the widest possible range of ideas as a basis for new standards.

The meeting will include various workshops to obtain input for specific topics. These include agricultural exemptions; agricultural versus nonagricultural environments; well-being of farm animals; and special considerations for major operative procedures.

Comments may be mailed to Richard L. Crawford, assistant deputy administrator for Animal Care, REAC, APHIS, USDA, 554 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782. Official notice of the meeting was published in the Sept. 13 Federal Register.



Release No. 0811.93
Dana Stewart (202) 720-5091
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USDA CONSIDERING CHANGES TO BEAN STANDARDS

WASHINGTON, Sept. 22--The USDA Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) today published an advance notice of proposed rulemaking on changes being considered to the U.S. Standards for Beans.

Specifically, FGIS is considering eliminating the factor "clean-cut weevil-bored beans" from the grade requirement for the class Blackeye beans; and changing the grade limits for the factors "total defects," "blistered, wrinkled and/or broken beans," and "splits" for the class Baby Lima beans.

According to FGIS acting administrator David Galliard, the agency is inviting comments, including data, views and suggestions regarding the recommended changes.

Written comments must be submitted on or before November 22, 1993, to George Wollam, FGIS, USDA, Room 0624 South Building, P.O. Box 96454, Washington, D.C. 20090-6454; or, automatic telecopier (202) 720-4628.



Release No. 0812.93
Ed Curlett (301) 436-7799
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USDA PROPOSES FEES FOR USERS OF QUARANTINE FACILITIES

WASHINGTON, Sept. 22 -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing to require persons importing horses, ruminants and swine through USDA quarantine facilities to pay for the care, feed, and handling of the animals in advance.

"This proposal is intended to protect the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service from financial losses in the event an importer places animals in quarantine and then fails to pay outstanding bills," said Billy G. Johnson, deputy administrator for veterinary services in APHIS.

Importers would pay the same fees as previously required, only upfront, Johnson said.

Notice of this proposal appeared in the Sept. 14 Federal Register. Comments will be accepted if they are received on or before Oct. 14. An original and three copies of written comments referring to docket number 93-073-1 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 804, Federal building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

Comments received may be reviewed at USDA, room 1141, South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue S.W., Washington D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday except holidays. Persons wishing to review comments are encouraged to call ahead on (202) 690-2817 to facilitate entry into the reading room.



Release No. 0813.93
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VOMITOXIN TESTING AVAILABLE

WASHINGTON, Sept. 22--Effective Sept. 23, the USDA Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) is offering official vomitoxin testing for grain, upon request, on a fee basis.

Scab, also known as head blight, pink mold, white heads, and tombstone scab, is a disease in wheat and other grains that is caused by certain fungi. Scab may, in turn, cause the occurrence of the mycotoxin deoxynivalenol (more commonly known as vomitoxin or DON).

According to FGIS acting administrator David Galliard, this year's weather was favorable for scab infection, the severity of which depends on weather conditions.

The vomitoxin testing service was announced as an interim rule with request for comment in today's Federal Register.

Written comments must be submitted on or before October 25, 1993, to George Wollam, FGIS, USDA, Room 0624 South Building, P.O. Box 96454, Washington, D.C. 20090-6454; or, automatic telecopier (202) 720-4628.



Release No. 0816.93

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USDA ANNOUNCES RESULTS OF ADDITIONAL FARMER-OWNED RESERVE SIGNUP OF 1992 FEED GRAINS

WASHINGTON, Sept. 22--Feed grain producers intend to place an additional 95.4 million bushels of 1992-crop corn, grain sorghum and barley in the Farmer-Owned Reserve, according to Randy Weber, acting executive vice president of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation.

Feed grain producers needed to file their additional intentions to enter 1992-crop corn, grain sorghum and barley in the FOR with their local office of USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service on or before August 31. Producers were also required to pledge 1992-crop feed grains intended for the FOR as collateral for a nine-month nonrecourse CCC price support loan.

Producers intended to place 374.5 million bushels of feed grains in the FOR during the initial signup period that ended April 30.

Because the intentions from both the original and additional signups are below the 900-million-bushel authorization, producers may place the entire quantity of 1992-crop corn, grain sorghum and barley they designated in the FOR. However, a producer's stated intention to place feed grains into the FOR does not obligate the producer to place the feed grains into the reserve.

The FOR loan rate will be the same rate as the nine-month loan rate. The FOR loans will mature 27 months from the date the regular loans mature, but producers may repay FOR loans any time before maturity without penalty.

Weber said producers will earn storage payments for feed grains pledged as collateral for FOR loans at an annual rate of 26.5 cents per bushel. Storage payments will be earned until market prices equal or exceed 95 percent of the current established target price. Interest will accrue when market prices equal or exceed 105 percent of the current target price. The current target prices per bushel are \$2.75 for corn, \$2.61 for grain sorghum and \$2.36 for barley.

The following table shows producers' additional intentions to enter 1992-crop corn, grain sorghum and barley into the FOR by state.

**ADDITIONAL QUANTITY OF 1992-CROP CORN, GRAIN SORGHUM AND BARLEY
INTENDED FOR THE FARMER-OWNED RESERVE PROGRAM ADDITIONAL INTENTIONS**

STATE	CORN -----	SORGHUM (bushels)	BARLEY -----	TOTAL
AL	21,076	0	0	21,076
AZ	0	0	0	0
AR	23,166	6,882	0	30,048
CA	0	0	24,003	24,003
CO	255,778	3,391	0	259,169
CT	0	0	0	0
DE	0	0	0	0
FL	0	0	0	0
GA	242,722	0	0	242,722
ID	0	0	47,785	47,785
IL	11,803,995	14,080	0	11,818,074
IN	3,047,256	0	0	3,047,256
IA	41,608,346	0	0	41,608,346
KS	1,199,106	568,344	0	1,767,450
KY	410,330	0	0	410,330

LA	0	0	0	0
ME	1,420	0	0	1,420
MD	72,865	0	0	72,865
MA	0	0	0	0
MI	638,993	0	0	638,993
MN	10,908,745	0	165,733	11,074,478
MS	0	0	0	0
MO	2,446,894	136,961	0	2,583,855
MT	0	0	151,082	151,082
NE	13,671,132	1,698,330	7,424	15,376,886
NV	0	0	0	0
NH	0	0	0	0
NJ	0	0	0	0
NM	46,163	145,800	0	191,963
NY	99,831	0	5,669	105,500
NC	198,792	0	0	198,792
ND	42,911	0	392,022	434,933
OH	439,209	0	0	439,209
OK	0	0	0	0
OR	0	0	0	0
PA	99,514	0	0	99,514
RI	0	0	0	0
SC	88,777	0	0	88,777
SD	2,990,893	40,507	45,054	3,076,454
TN	383,612	0	0	383,612
TX	110,462	96,720	0	207,182
UT	0	0	943	943
VT	0	0	0	0
VA	106,493	0	0	106,493
WA	0	0	93,590	93,590
WV	0	0	0	0
WI	760,326	0	0	760,326
WY	0	0	0	0
US	91,718,807	2,711,014	933,305	95,363,126

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Release No. 0817.93
 Jim Brownlee (202) 720-2091

ESPY ANNOUNCES DATE OF FORUM ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT

WASHINGTON, September 23--Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy today announced he will hold a forum here on Oct. 8 to address the challenges faced by rural communities.

"Rural America is ready to respond," Espy said. "We need to develop new and improved strategies to make rural areas and rural people full partners in America's future, to enable them to be competitive and successful in the 21st century."

The time and location of the forum in Washington will be announced next week. The morning session will include dialogue between Secretary Espy, Under Secretary Bob Nash, and a panel of people who live and work in rural America. The focus will be on the wide array of resources found in rural communities and the challenges faced by these communities in using their assets fully.

The afternoon session will feature a second panel of rural Americans and will center on strategies used by individuals and communities to add economic value to their resource base.

Espy said USDA also will hold several regional rural development forums across the country. Dates and locations will be announced at a later date.

The Oct. 8 rural development forum is one of several issues forums that Espy is conducting this year around the country.

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Release No. 0818.93

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TOP AWARD FOR USDA'S RESEARCH AGENCY GOES TO NUTRITIONIST

WASHINGTON, Sept. 23--Forrest H. Nielsen, who oversees nutrition research at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's center in Grand Forks, N.D., will be honored today as "distinguished scientist" for 1993 by USDA's Agricultural Research Service. The award is the research agency's highest scientific honor.

Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy will present honors to Nielsen and four "outstanding" ARS scientists at the department's Celebration of Excellence beginning at 10:00 a.m. on the Mall in front of USDA's administration building.

"Dr. Nielsen's research has contributed greatly to the acceptance of boron, nickel, arsenic, silicon and vanadium as essential for human health," said R. Dean Plowman, acting assistant secretary for science and education."

Plowman said Nielsen has become internationally recognized as the dean of "ultratrace elements"--a term the nutritionist coined to describe a class of nutrients, required in only millionths of a gram per day. And his current research on an interplay between two established elements--copper and magnesium--in the human body could change how science views their nutritional importance, Plowman added.

Nielsen will receive a cash award, plaque and additional research funds to use to further elucidate the role of silicon in bone formation.

An ARS researcher since 1969, Nielsen became director of the Grand Forks Human Nutrition Research Center in 1985 and steered research toward the discovery of new essential elements and unknown roles for accepted ones.

He and co-workers are best known for putting boron on the map of essential elements. First reported in 1987, their findings that a little extra boron in the diet helps maintain healthy bones in older women still attracts weekly inquiries from the public and the news media.

In addition to his administrative and research duties, Nielsen served on a joint United Nations expert consultation group on trace element requirements and on the editorial board of the Journal of Nutrition. Currently, he is president of the International Society for Trace Element Research in Humans and serves on the editorial boards of two other journals.

He has more than 300 scientific articles and publications to his credit and has given invited presentations at dozens of symposia, which were subsequently published as book chapters.

Being honored with Nielsen are three "Outstanding Senior Scientists. They will each receive a cash award, plaque and additional research funds. They are:

--Edgar G. King, director, Subtropical Agricultural Research Laboratory, Weslaco, Texas, for his contributions to biological pest control and rearing of beneficial insects, and for "creative leadership" of the research program and diversifying the laboratory's work force.

--Barbara A. Leonhardt, research leader, Insect Chemical Ecology Laboratory, Beltsville, Md., for exceptional discoveries in and contributions to the control of insects with their own "perfumes" and other semiochemicals.

--James A. Young, research leader, Conservation Biology of Rangelands, Reno, Nev., for sustained contributions to an understanding of the ecology of rangelands and to improving their environmental quality.

One "Outstanding Early Career Scientist"--designated for researchers with ARS for seven years or less--will receive a cash award, plaque and additional research support. That scientist is Susan L. Meyer, research plant pathologist, Nematology Laboratory, Beltsville, Md., for discovering and developing unique fungal agents to control nematode parasites of plants and for transferring the technology to users.

Yesterday, four other senior scientists were recognized at the Beltsville, Md., research center as "Scientists of the Year" in their geographic areas. They were:

--Robert R. Kraeling, research leader, animal physiology, Athens, Ga.

--Donald R. Ort, plant physiologist, Urbana, Ill.

- Hugo H. Rogers, Jr., plant physiologist, Auburn, Ala.
- James B. Russell, research microbiologist, Ithaca, N.Y.

And seven "Area Early Career Research Scientists" each received awards. They were:

- Douglas D. Buhler, research agronomist, St. Paul, Minn.
- Richard K. Gast, microbiologist, Athens, Ga.
- Robert A. Graybosch, research geneticist, Lincoln, Neb.
- Martin A. Locke, soil scientist, Stoneville, Miss.
- Peter W. Mason, microbiologist, Orient Point, N.Y.
- Steven E. Naranjo, research entomologist, Phoenix, Ariz.
- H. Wayne Polley, ecologist, Temple, Tex.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: For details on the "distinguished scientist," contact Forrest H. Nielsen, director, Grand Forks Human Nutrition Research Center, Agricultural Research Service, USDA, Grand Forks, N.D. 58202-9034; telephone (701) 795-8456. For details on other ARS scientists receiving awards, contact Judy McBride, Information Staff, USDA-ARS, Greenbelt, Md. 20770; telephone (301) 344-2861.

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Release No. 0821.93
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ESPY SAYS PRESIDENT'S HEALTH PLAN WILL BENEFIT FARMERS AND RURAL FAMILIES

WASHINGTON, Sept. 23 -- Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy said the President's health care plan will have far reaching benefits for farmers and rural families.

"The President's health care plan meets the unique needs and circumstances of farmers and rural families," said Espy. "While serving as a congressman for a rural district and now as I travel all across rural America, I know that access to quality health care means more than just health care coverage. It means access to affordable health care providers and facilities and up-to-date information. The President's plan addresses all of these concerns."

The plan provides effective strategies for delivering and financing health care in rural areas and increasing the availability of care for families and opportunities for providers. It also allows states flexibility to develop health plans which suit their specific geographic needs - assuring that the needs of rural states won't be forgotten.

Under the current health care system, rural communities are suffering. A total of 34 million people -- half of them with incomes under 200 percent of poverty -- live in rural areas with inadequate health care. Seventeen percent of rural Americans have no health insurance, including 25 percent of farm families. To make matters worse, the number of rural physicians is declining making it difficult for rural Americans with insurance to access available services.

Some of the important aspects in the health care proposal include:

- *Allowing self-employed farmers to deduct 100 percent of their health care costs. Currently, the self-employed can only deduct 25 percent of their health care costs.
- *Making coverage more affordable for farmers and other rural Americans through the development of regional alliances, which will allow rural residents to have more bargaining leverage.
- *Ensuring universal coverage which will include all part-time and seasonal workers. This will channel significant new resources into rural health care and help to stabilize the financial base for rural health care providers.
- *Expanding efforts of the National Health Service Corps which will place nearly 3,000 primary care providers in rural areas by the year 2000.
- *Expanding the role of nurse practitioners.

- *Providing incentives for primary care physicians to serve in rural areas through improved reimbursement payments and bonuses.
- *Providing federal funding and technical assistance to develop primary care systems in underserved rural areas.
- *Providing funds to link, via telecommunications, rural area providers to health care centers and institutions.

"The President's Health Security Act should be particularly welcomed by rural Americans because it addresses some of the long-standing health care problems that have plagued rural communities year after year," said Espy. "With this plan, we will help to ensure that rural families have the care and feeling of security that all Americans deserve."



Release No. 0824.93
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ESPY ANNOUNCES BREAKTHROUGH WITH JAPAN ON U.S. APPLES

WASHINGTON, Sept. 24--Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy announced today that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has received assurances from the Japanese government regarding entry of U.S. 1994 crop apples.

"I am pleased that we have finally developed a solution to this long-standing and difficult problem which has created conflict in our trade relations," Espy said. "Our apple industry and our scientists have worked very hard over the past decade to resolve Japan's technical concerns.

Meetings between scientists from both countries resulted in agreement on a step-by-step plan of action to resolve the technical issues in contention including confirmatory test for fire blight and the method of orchard inspection at blossom time. Following satisfactory conclusion of on-site inspections by May 1994, the Japanese government will conduct their required public hearings and final rule making procedures in order for Japanese inspectors to be positioned in U.S. apple production areas in time for the Pacific Northwest apple harvest.

The Japanese government has agreed to "conduct expeditiously the government actions required to realize the entry of 1994 crop U.S. apples when all scientific requirements have been met," according to Japan's Vice Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. The commitment came in response to a joint letter from Secretary Espy and U.S. Trade Representative Micky Kantor, who have been pressing for a positive resolution to this issue. U.S. concerns over the continued ban on U.S. apple exports to Japan came to a head earlier this year when it became apparent that at least another year would be lost due to Japanese technical stipulations.

"The Department of Agriculture fully intends to satisfy all remaining technical requirements and our experts, working closely with industry, are moving forward to satisfy them. We will closely monitor all developments to ensure that U.S. 1994 crop apples enter the Japanese market as expected. We remain confident that our apples meet their requirements," Espy stated.

The export protocol under discussion will cover golden and red delicious apples from the states of Washington and Oregon. Preliminary estimates indicate that U.S. apple exports to Japan could reach \$15 to \$20 million in the first year with steady growth bringing the annual total to \$75 million or more over the next four to five years. Exports of 1994 U.S. apples would begin in early 1995.



Program Announcements-

Release No. 0806.93

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USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES, MARKETING CERTIFICATE RATES

WASHINGTON, Sept 21--Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture Eugene Moos today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

--long grain whole kernels:	6.80 cents per pound
--medium grain whole kernels:	6.17 cents per pound
--short grain whole kernels:	6.09 cents per pound
--broken kernels:	3.40 cents per pound

Based upon these milled rice world market prices, loan deficiency payment (LDP) rates, gains from repaying price support loans at the world market price, and marketing certificate rates are:

	Loan Gain and LDP Rate	Marketing Certificate Rate
\$/Cwt.....	
--for long grain:	\$2.03	\$0.42
--for medium grain:	\$1.84	\$0.40
--for short grain:	\$1.84	\$0.35

These announced prices and rates are effective today at 3 p.m. EDT. The next scheduled price announcement will be made Sept. 28 at 3 p.m. EDT.



Release No. 0820.93

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USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE AND USER MARKETING CERTIFICATE PAYMENT RATE FOR UPLAND COTTON

WASHINGTON, Sept. 23--Bruce R. Weber, acting executive vice president of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation, today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price or AWP), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (leaf grade 4, micronaire 3.5-3.6 and 4.3-4.9, strength 24-25 grams per tex) upland cotton (base quality), and the coarse count adjustment (CCA) in effect from 5:00 p.m. today through 3:59 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 30. The user marketing certificate payment rate announced today is in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, Sept. 24, through midnight Thursday, Sept. 30.

The Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended, provides that the AWP may be further adjusted if: (a) the AWP is less than 115 percent of the current crop year loan rate for base quality upland cotton, and (b) the Friday through Thursday average price quotation for the lowest-priced U.S. growth as quoted for Middling (M) 1-3/32 inch cotton, C.I.F. northern Europe (USNE price) exceeds the Northern Europe (NE) price. The maximum allowable adjustment is the difference between the USNE price and the NE price.

A further adjustment to this week's calculated AWP may be made in accordance with this provision. The calculated AWP is 80 percent of the 1993 upland cotton base quality loan rate, and the USNE price exceeds the NE price by 2.63 cents per pound. Following are the relevant calculations:

I.	Calculated AWP	41.64 cents per pound
	1993 Base Loan Rate	52.35 cents per pound
	AWP as a Percent of Loan Rate	80
II.	USNE Price	57.90 cents per pound
	NE Price	- 55.27 cents per pound
	Maximum Adjustment Allowed	2.63 cents per pound

Based on a consideration of the U.S. share of world exports, the current level of cotton export sales and cotton export shipments, and other relevant data, no further adjustment to this week's calculated AWP will be made.

This week's AWP and coarse count adjustment are determined as follows:

Adjusted World Price

NE Price	55.27
Adjustments:	
Avg. U.S. spot market location	11.82
SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton	1.50
Avg. U.S. location	0.31
Sum of Adjustments	- 13.63
Calculated AWP	41.64
Further AWP adjustment	- 0
ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE	41.64 cents/lb.

Coarse Count Adjustment

NE Price	55.27
NE Coarse Count Price	- 51.13
	4.14
Adjustment to SLM 1-1/32 inch cotton	- 3.20
COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT	0.94 cents/lb.

Because the AWP is below the 1991, 1992, and 1993 base quality loan rates of 50.77, 52.35, and 52.35 cents per pound, respectively, the loan repayment rate during this period is equal to the AWP, adjusted for the specific quality and location plus applicable interest and storage charges. The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates.

Because the AWP is below the 1993-crop loan rate, cash loan deficiency payments (LDPs) will be paid to eligible producers who agree to forgo obtaining a price support loan with respect to the 1993 crop. The payment rate is equal to the difference between the loan rate and the AWP. Producers are allowed to obtain an LDP on a bale-by-bale basis.

The USNE price has not exceeded the NE price by more than 1.25 cents per pound for four consecutive weeks and the AWP has not exceeded 130 percent of the 1993 crop year base quality loan rate in any week of the 4-week period. As a result, the user marketing certificate payment rate is 0 cents per pound. This rate is applicable during the Friday through Thursday period for bales opened by domestic users and for cotton contracts entered into by exporters for delivery prior to Sept. 30, 1994. Relevant data are summarized below:

Week	For the Friday through Thursday Period Ending	USNE Price	NE Price cents/lb	User Marketing Certificate Payment Rate
1	Sept. 2, 1993	56.13	55.00	0
2	Sept. 9, 1993	56.40	54.99	0
3	Sept. 16, 1993	58.10	55.42	0
4	Sept. 23, 1993	57.90	55.27	0

Next week's AWP, CCA and user marketing certificate payment rate will be announced on Thursday, Sept 30.



